United States Environmental Protection Agency

Region 10 Emergency Response Unit

POLLUTION REPORT

I. HEADING

Date: September 4, 2001
Subject: Hermiston Lab Site
From: Mike Sibley, OSC, USEPA, Region 10, Emergency Response Unit
Tel: Office (206) 553-1886
TO: See Distribution List on last page

POLREP No.2

II. BACKGROUND

Site ID: SSID # 108M
Delivery Order No: 81-10-19
Response Authority: CERCLA
FPN No: NA
NPL Status: NA
State Notification: Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Action Memo Status: July 12, 2001
Removal Start Date: August 27, 2001
Expected Completion Date: September 8, 2001
Site Web Page: http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/hermiston

III. SITE INFORMATION

A. Incident Category

Emergency Response Action

B. Site Description

1. Site Location

See Polrep #1.

C. Assessment Results

The EPA tasked Ecology and Environment Inc. (E & E) Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START), to assess the risks associated with the Capmartin Site. On June 8, 2001, an inspection was performed by Dan Heister, EPA OSC, and Bill Mehnert, E&E contractor. The inspection detailed visible chemicals and indicated that additional materials were present but could not be readily identified. The operator of the facility died recently and the site is not currently occupied or monitored. As an inactive facility, there are significant concerns about the stability of the site. Chemicals are stored in a haphazard manner with the possibility of fire and or chemical release. Although the site is fenced, the site is not secured against vandals or the curious. The danger of explosion and/or vandalism is a major concern.

The inspection of the building and back yard produced an inventory including the following materials:

- 800 lbs. pelletized potassium cyanide;
- 8, 55-gallon drums labeled caustic which are more likely acidic solutions;
- 16, 5-gallon buckets of acid sludge;
- 20, 1-gallon jugs of hydrochloric acid;
- 30, 1-gallon jugs of sulfuric acid;
- 200 smaller laboratory-sized containers of various unknown chemicals;
- Approximately 400 lbs of marine type batteries;
- 8-10 PCB containers;
- Small amounts of radioactive material;
- Brick of sodium metal suspended in drum of oil;
- Trash & debris.
- Soil contaminated with heavy metals

On June 27, 2001, an additional inspection was performed by Mike Sibley, EPA OSC, Jerry Wade, EPA cleanup contractor, and Bill Mehnert, E&E. The inspection detailed the following additional materials that were present but locked up in cabinets:

- 30, 1-gallon glass containers believed to contain a 78% solution of nitric acid;
- numerous other containers (whiskey bottles) with unknown contents (assumed to be nitric acid) are present in the camper top;
- 11 boxes (with four 1-gallon bottles each) containing formic acid, sulfuric acid, and nitric acid;
- numerous glass containers containing xylene and oxalic acid were found in locked cabinets;
- surplus trailer containing obsolete electronic computer equipment, and;
- numerous vessels & vacuum tubes containing mercury.

In addition, during this inspection certain materials (PCB electrical transformers/capacitors and marine batteries), that are likely to contain hazardous substances, were missing from the Site. The property owner, who was present during the inspection was unable to account for the disappearance of these materials.

IV. Response Information

A. Situation

1. Initial Situation

August 27, 2001 (Monday)
Personnel on site: 1 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 1 Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START), 1 Emergency and Rapid Response Services contractor (ERRS), 6 Rocky Mountain Catastrophe (RMCat), 2 IT Group, 1 Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) (Total 12).
Weather: Sunny with a high of 85° F expected.

Personnel and equipment were mobilized to the site. Exclusion zones and the decontamination area were established. Two rolloff boxes were brought to the site by Mr. Kik (one for scrap metal and one for non-hazardous debris).
Conducted safety meeting and reviewed the IT site safety plan.
Opened the green trailer located immediately north of the fenced area and discovered several containers which would need to be categorized by hazard class. A white camper trailer was also entered but no hazardous chemicals were observed.

August 28, 2001 (Tuesday)
Personnel on site: 6 RMCat, 2 IT Group, 1 ODEQ, 1 START, 1 ERRS (11 total).
Weather: Clear skies with a high of 90° F expected.

RMCat begins to clear metal debris from the backyard area to be sent to Ross Machine and Iron, Inc. in Hermiston, Oregon. The metal will then be sent to Schnitzer Steel for recycling and paperwork will be provided by Ross indicating the metals had been transported to Schnitzer. One rolloff box of scrap metal weighing 7,070 pounds was transported to Ross.

August 29, 2001 (Wednesday)
Personnel on site: 5 RMCat, 1 IT Group, 1 ODEQ, 1 START, 1 ERRS (9 total).
Weather: Clear skies with a high of 95° F.

Crew continues to remove scrap metal for recycling and non-hazardous materials (i.e. wood, paper) for disposal from the backyard area. Two rolloff boxes of recyclable metal weighing 17, 660 pounds were sent to Ross Machine and Iron, Inc. One rolloff box of debris weighing 3,000 pounds was sent to the local sanitary disposal transfer station (located less than 0.5 miles from the site). All of the materials (including the non-hazardous debris) that are shipped off-site are manifested for tracking purposes.

August 30, 2001 (Thursday)
Personnel on site: 5 RMCat, 2 IT Group, 1 START, 1 ERRS (Total 9).
Weather: Clear skies with a high of 100° F expected.

Pallets of white bricks located in the backyard area of the site are sampled as they are suspected of containing asbestos. Analytical results from Certified Environmental Consulting lab are expected next week. The IT health and safety coordinator visits the site and conducts air monitoring with personal sampling pumps fitted with filter cassettes to be worn by the RMCat crew. The filter cassettes will be analyzed for metals. RMCat continues to load out scrap metal for recycling (2 rolloff boxes weighing 14,910 pounds) and waste/debris (1 box weighing 2,000 pounds) for transport to the local sanitary transfer station.

August 31, 2001 (Friday)
Personnel on site: 5 RMCat, 1 IT Group, 1 START, 1 ERRS (8 total).
Weather: Partly cloudy skies with a high of 88°F expected. Strong winds are also predicted so dust suppression with water will be conducted today.

The majority of the recyclable metals and waste debris in the backyard-fenced area has been removed. Two additional boxes of scrap metal weighing 16,260 pounds and one additional box of debris weighing 2,680 pounds were transported off-site. Unprocessed (no chemicals added) computer circuit boards were loaded into a five cubic yard rolloff box. These boards may be processed at a later date for recovery of precious metals or they may be disposed. Containers of solids and liquids (unknowns) located in the fenced backyard were segregated. Hazard categorization (field screening) of samples from these containers will begin tomorrow to segregate the unknowns as either non-hazardous or into hazard characteristic waste streams.

2. Removal Actions to Date

August 28, 2001

Type	Quantity	Location Where Taken
Scrap metal for recycling only Roll-off boxes 74 & 107	14,910 pounds (2 boxes)	Ross Machine & Iron for baling and transport to Schnitzer Steel Products
Nonhazardous wood & debris Roll-off box 27	2,000 pounds (1 box)	Sanitary Disposal, Inc., transfer station for transport to Finley Butte landfill

August 29, 2001

Type	Quantity	Location Where Taken
Scrap metal for recycling only	17,660 pounds (2 boxes)	Ross Machine & Iron for baling and transport to Schnitzer Steel Products
Nonhazardous wood & debris	3,000 pounds (1 box)	Sanitary Disposal, Inc., transfer station for transport to Finley Butte landfill

August 30, 2001

Type	Quantity	Location Where Taken
Scrap metal for recycling only Roll-off boxes 74 & 107	14,910 pounds (2 boxes)	Ross Machine & Iron for baling and transport to Schnitzer Steel Products
Nonhazardous wood & debris Roll-off box 27	2,000 pounds (1 box)	Sanitary Disposal, Inc., transfer station for transport to Finley Butte landfill

August 31, 2001

Type	Quantity	Location Where Taken
Scrap metal for recycling only Roll-off boxes 74 & 141	16,260 pounds (2 boxes)	Ross Machine & Iron for baling and transport to Schnitzer Steel Products

Type	Quantity	Location Where Taken
Nonhazardous wood & debris Roll-off box 141 (scrap was emptied and the box was returned to the site)	2,680 pounds (1 box)	Sanitary Disposal, Inc., transfer station for transport to Finley Butte landfill
Pick-up trucks, concrete pads, hoses, belts for reuse	various	Bill Kik

3. Enforcement

Enforcement actions are being reviewed at this time by EPA.

B. Planned Removal Activities

- Remove flat-bed truck with mining equipment from the site.
- Begin work in lab, housekeeping and inventorying.
- Open the white trailer in the fenced yard and hazard categorization of materials. Hazard categorization of the contents of the fiber drums, labeled ion exchange resin (attempt a visual confirmation that the material is unused).
- Remove chemicals from the storage room and office to the lab.
- Organization of drums and documents hazard categorization and disposal tests, and removal of containers from the site.

C. Next Steps

EPA, and E&E to continue to perform oversight of the removal actions until completion, which is estimated at 9/07/01.

V. Cost Information

Estimated costs are summarized below:

	Established Ceiling	Estimated Costs (as of 1/29/00)
EPA	$ 2,500	$ 600
START	$ 29,600	$ 6,555

ERRS	$ 35,000	$ 13,038
Total	$ 67,100	$ 20,193

Note: The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

VI Disposition of Wastes

No hazardous wastes have been removed from site so far. Only non hazardous wastes mentioned above in current removal actions have been disposed

VII Distribution

To:

Terry Eby, EPA Headquarters
Chris Field, Mary Matthews, OSCs, EPA Region 10 Emergency Response Unit
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Attention: Chuck Donaldson, Emergency Response
EPA Oregon Office, Attention: Dan Opalski
EPA Oregon Office, Attention: Dan Heister

VII Status

Site actions are pending.